

Re: MB Docket No. 04-233
FCC Broadcast Localism Initiatives Comments

KLKN-TV, Citadel Communications LLC
City of License-Lincoln, NE
November 17, 2004

Channel 8 KLKN-TV, serving the Lincoln and Southeast Nebraska area, has been and remains committed to providing our viewers with high quality coverage of local news and public service. Our relationship with our community, along with our ascertainment policy helps us to define the needs of our community and develop strategies to meet them. We cover local issues of interests during our local regularly scheduled newscasts and on our website. Additionally, we break into programming to provide timely emergency weather information, school closings, AMBER Alerts, and breaking news information. We also believe that it is important to maintain a positive relationship with our community through sponsoring, co-sponsoring, publicizing, promoting and devoting time and talent to our area public service agencies, organizations and community wide projects. Over the past year we assisted community events and projects affecting Volunteer-A-Thon: How About 8?, The SantaCop Auction, July Jamm, Haymarket Heydays, Make-A-Wish Academy Awards Night, The Lancaster County Chapter of the American Red Cross “Salute to Heroes” and raising funds for the reconstruction of the historic “Sunken Gardens”, just to name a few.

To guide our efforts in both news and public service, we have an active *local ascertainment* process. Each quarter, we hold an *ascertainment meeting* and/or meetings in which we invite six to ten guests, representing a cross-section of the community. Through the course of our discussion, we attempt to ascertain what they believe to be the most important issues facing our area. Guests to Channel 8 KLKN-TV are asked to complete a *“community needs ascertainment questionnaire”*. During the course of the year, we review and inspect over one hundred questionnaires. Both help guide our news and public service programming choices. Our efforts to meet the needs and interests of the community are also documented in more significant detail in the Quarterly Issues/Program List Report, which is located in our Public File.

KLKN-TV invests a considerable amount of time and resources to *local news programming*. We air four hours of local news programming each weekday and one hour on both Saturdays and Sundays. Channel 8 Eyewitness newscasts are regularly scheduled to air M-F at 5:30am-7:00am, M-F at 11:00am-12:00pm, M-F at 5:00pm-5:30pm, M-Sa at 6:00pm-6:30pm, M-Su at 10:00pm-10:35pm and Sunday at 5:30pm-6:00pm.

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Channel 8 Eyewitness News strives to be the primary source of news and information for our viewers by reporting on the events and issues that affect them everyday in their own backyard. We take that responsibility very seriously as we make decisions about the news we cover and the ways in which we cover it. Our primary goal is to give our viewers the information they need to be responsible members of the community, to make informed decisions about the important issues faced by the community, and to participate in a meaningful way in the overall life of the community. Last November, the People's City Mission revealed that they were low on funds and over-crowded. We produced a live 10PM newscast from the People's City Mission devoted mostly to plight of the homeless and the need for donations to serve them. We have also presented in-depth information on the budgeting difficulty for Lincoln Public Schools and its affect on the quality of education, the "smoking ban" discussed by the Lincoln City Council, the latest in health research and care, and local gambling initiatives. In addition, we regularly provide live, on-the-scene coverage of emergencies, weather and other breaking news, including traffic information and street conditions during winter weather.

Our website compliments our on-air news coverage and our commitment to the community by providing news and information. When our viewers log onto our website at www.klknv.com they will find Channel 8 Eyewitness News Top Stories, national, regional and local headlines, local radar and weather information, employment opportunities, community information and events and links to websites to find more information on stories broadcast during the course of our local newscasts. A morning forecast is delivered via email to those who have registered to receive the weather forecast.

Our sports team also know they have a commitment to cover local sports. Nebraska is Cornhusker country and we know that the great majority of our viewers consider the fate of the football team to be of high interest to them. Live broadcasts of pre-game shows give our viewers plenty of inside information to digest and use around the water cooler. We also regularly produce pre-season and post-season football specials for our viewers. On Friday nights, our sports team covers local high school sports games and presents an expanded sports broadcast during the Friday night 10pm newscast; we call it "Sports Blitz".

Two Channel 8 Eyewitness News Forum segments air during Channel 8 Eyewitness News Midday program. These **local public affairs oriented segments** are three minutes in length and primarily focus on local events and issues, featuring local community leaders, volunteers, event participants, agency representatives, etc. These segments have included discussion on Pediatric Health, the Lincoln Arts Festival, The Capital Humane Society, the Lincoln Symphony, Houseplant Care, Credit Card Spending, The Lincoln

Convention and Visitors Bureau, Pioneers Park Nature Center, Community Policing, Lincoln's Children's Museum, The Better Business Bureau, The Lincoln Blood Bank, Foster Grand parenting Program, Aging Services, Southeast Community College Job Fair, Financial Consulting, The Lincoln Police Departments' Direct Line, Black History Month, Eating Disorders, Madonna Rehabilitation Center, The Lincoln Literacy Council, Colon Cancer Month, Teenage Pregnancy, The City's Yard Waste Program and Union College Theatre. In addition, we produce :30 Community Calendar announcements which promote smaller events from Garage Sale fundraisers to church chili suppers. These run though out our broadcast day.

In addition to regularly scheduled news and information programming, we also have systems put in place to provide **emergency programming** information when warranted. Special news reports, severe weather announcements, school closings and cancellations, Amber Alert notifications, and EAS messages are all examples of these emergency-programming commitments. During severe weather, our meteorologists break into programming to provide the latest emergency weather information. Recently, the town of Hallam, NE and rural areas south of Lincoln were devastated by tornadoes. Townspeople in Hallam credit Channel 8 KLKN-TV for saving their lives. Chief Meteorologist Kevin Coskren and meteorologist Phil Browder identified the storm as very dangerous, even before the tornadoes touched down and provided over four hours of non-stop weather information to viewers as they tracked the storm's progress, alerting all in its way. As a result, Channel 8 KLKN-TV was awarded with a commendation for "Outstanding Duty Performance" by the bishop of the Lincoln Area Methodist Church.

Leading up to the 2004 election Channel 8 KLKN-TV made a commitment to provide **political oriented programming** in order to better inform our viewers on local candidate viewpoints and issues. We also made a concerted effort to give viewers a reason to get out and vote.

Starting on September 7th until Election Day, Channel 8 KLKN-TV committed to air a **daily** minimum of five minutes devoted to **election coverage during our regularly scheduled newscasts**. This coverage included information on candidates, as well as information on the amendments and initiatives viewers would find on their ballot. Scripts and tally sheets of this coverage can be found in our Public File.

In addition, we offered all qualified candidates for federal office, representing our viewing area, five minutes of **free airtime** to air in September and October. Invitations were extended to presidential candidates George Bush and John Kerry, 1st Congressional District candidates Jeff Fortenberry, Matt Coneally and Steve Larrick, and 3rd Congressional District candidates, Tom Osborne, Donna Anderson and Joseph Rosberg.

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Joseph Rosberg, Nebraska Party candidate for the 3rd District, President George Bush, and Senator John Kerry did not respond to our invitations. The five-minute candidate messages air on Saturday and Sunday nights following our 10pm newscasts.

In July and August of 2004, we took advantage of the new technology and our ability to offer the Democratic and Republican National Conventions to viewers of our digital channel. Our coverage began at 3:00PM and continued until around 10:00PM, each day.

In August, we teamed up with the Nebraska AARP to televise a *live candidate forum* for candidates competing for Nebraska's 1st Congressional District seat. Using AARP's rules, Jeff Fortenberry(R) and Matt Coneally(D) received and accepted invitations to meet on October 14 at the Embassy Suites in downtown Lincoln. The forum, moderated by Channel 8 Eyewitness News anchor Rod Fowler aired live from 7:00PM – 8:00PM. Candidates responded to questions and had the opportunity to answer follow-up questions presented by a panel. The three panelists were Jane Monich of KLIN Radio, Larry Wentz of KCAU-TV and Pat Henry, a local AARP volunteer. The forum was uplinked, and aired live on sister station, KCAU-TV in Sioux City, IA.

Channel 8 KLKN-TV also aired a "Get Out and Vote" campaign to remind viewers to vote. Our main anchor team fronted these spots. In total, 30 announcements aired 42 times and Station ID's aired 168 between October 15 and November 3rd throughout the broadcast day.

Channel 8 KLKN-TV also takes an active part in our community through our, *partnerships, and media sponsorships*, to promote local service organizations, projects, fundraising efforts, and community events. This is accomplished through a combination of airing public service announcements, placing the information on our website, and airing features and stories during our newscasts.

Channel 8 KLKN-TV has formed major *partnerships* with a number of community organizations. In addition to airtime, Channel 8 KLKN-TV staff members devote time, talent and other resources to their cause.

- **Volunteer-A-Thon: How About 8?**

This community wide campaign is conducted in conjunction with Volunteer Partners, a local organization who matches volunteers with agencies. The Volunteer-A-Thon took place over a four-week period during which we devoted on-air time to promote the benefits of volunteering and how easy it is to volunteer. A volunteer staff member participated on the "steering committee". The campaign asked residents to volunteer 8 hours or donate 8 dollars. This event increased the number of hours volunteered and money donated. Outside

of on-air, we promoted volunteerism during our newscasts. Our website contained information about the project, volunteerism and a link to the volunteer form.

- **Channel 8 Blood Donor Day**

This event is a co-venture with the Community Blood Bank to raise awareness for the need for donors. We devoted time and space, 30 days, leading up to the actual day on our newscasts, on-air PSA's and on our website. The Blood Bank reported a record month and credited Channel 8 KLKN-TV for the results.

- **Lancaster County Chapter of the American Red Cross Salute to Heroes**

This event is designed to recognize the good deeds that people do every day in seven categories, including Animal Rescue, Good Samaritan, etc. Channel 8 Eyewitness News Anchor Natalie Faunce, also a board member of the local chapter, was the spokesperson in our on-air announcements and was the emcee at the awards ceremony. Other promotion included on-air mentions and stories aired during the newscasts and information and a link to the nomination form on our website. Channel 8 KLKN-TV produced seven stories, which not only ran at the ceremony, but also aired for seven nights on our late news.

- **Union Bank Magic Moments**

Union Bank approached us to help them search for residents who need a "Magic Moment". Channel 8 Eyewitness News anchor Rod Fowler recorded on-air announcements asking the community to nominate someone with specific needs, especially during the holiday season. We also supported the on-air with more information on our website and during our newscasts. Ten deserving nominees received items and/or services they would not have been able to get themselves. Channel 8 Eyewitness News aired the stories of the winners and we are already in full swing for year two. Vice-president of marketing for Union Bank said, "Without Channel 8, we'd never be able to let all of the Lincoln community know about the Magic Moments program."

As a *media sponsor*, we air public service announcements, promote on our newscasts and/or use our website to promote local events and projects. During the past year we have assisted The Salvation Army's Holiday Campaign, Make-A-Wish Foundation, The American Cancer Society's Walk for the Cure, The American Heart Association's HeartWalk, the Lincoln Community Health Endowment for a Healthier Lincoln, Lincoln Food Bank, The Lincoln Ad Club Scholarship Program, Lincoln Chamber of Commerce Tech Fair, Lincoln Lights to benefit the Cornhusker Boy Scouts Council, Haymarket Heydays, Project Safe Neighborhood, The Lincoln Arts Council's new website, Lincoln Parks and Recreation's fundraiser for the Sunken Gardens, Bob Hohn ALS Golf,

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fundraiser, Lincoln's Children's Zoo programs, USA Roller Sports National Championships held in Lincoln, Lincoln Public Schools "Fund-A-Need" program, Lincoln Arts Council's Annual ArtsFest, July Jamm, and the United Way, The Nebraska State Fair, Lincoln Police Department's SantaCop program for underprivileged children. During the past hurricane season and following local weather disasters, we promoted fundraising to assist for relief efforts on the news and website.

We have enjoyed a special relationship with the **Muscular Dystrophy Association** over the past 8 years. September 2004 marked our ninth Labor Day Telethon. Along with airing the annual telethon and producing the local segments each Labor Day, we promote the various fundraising events, year-round.

In May of 2004, we honored the top area high school seniors in our **"Best of the Class"** project, sponsored by Nebraska Wesleyan University and the Nebraska College Savings Plan. On May 5th, we invited them to participate in an event designed to recognize their scholastic achievements. The students were treated to lunch at Nebraska Wesleyan University and a program highlighted by speaker Kelly Eaton the 2003 Carnegie Professor of the Year Award winner. Students spent the morning posing for the Channel 8 KLKN-TV cameras to be incorporated into :30 spots congratulating them on their accomplishments. These spots aired from May 17 – June 27.

Members of the Channel 8 KLKN-TV staff belong to a variety of local groups and organizations including, Rotary, Kiwanis, The American Red Cross, Boy Scouts Council and other service organizations. We serve lunches at the People's City Mission, walk for various fundraising events to raise money to fight breast cancer and/or heart disease, donate to the United Way, belong to church groups, coach youth sports, read to pre-school classes, buy Girl Scout cookies and attend chili, spaghetti and pancake feeds. Station management and on-air news talent regularly visit area classrooms to discuss, broadcasting, meteorology, marketing and journalism. And on top of that, our main anchor team gladly accommodates requests to emcee ceremonies and attend civic events.

Channel 8 KLKN-TV connects our viewers to their community in our local newscasts, our community partnerships, our media sponsorships, our political programming and our public service programming. We take our ascertainment policy seriously and endeavor to meet the needs and interests of our community. We not only serve the Lincoln and Southeast Nebraska community, we take an active part in it.

Roger Moody

Vice-President and General Manager

KLKN-TV, Citadel Communications LLC